

*Policy  
Soviet  
Copyright  
Problems*

*DDI  
Report*

23 March 1976

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : Soviet Copyright Problem

1. This responds to your request for a report on the Soviet copyright situation and its impact on FBIS services.

2. The USSR became a signatory to the Universal Copyright Convention (UCC) in May 1973. We continued to translate and disseminate Soviet copyright material without restriction based on advice of OGC and our own judgment that the value of this material to the public outweighed the small risk of such a policy. Subsequently, certain U.S. firms began to enter into "exclusive translation right" contracts with the Soviet Copyright Office (VAAP). As we became aware of publications covered by such contracts we restricted dissemination of translations to USIB components only.

3. In January 1975 VAAP complained to JPRS that it had translated (in January 1974) a copyrighted Soviet book, MIROVOY OKEAN (THE WORLD OCEAN), consigned to a publisher in April 1973, but not actually published until May. A copy of VAAP's letter and its translation are attached. Upon receipt of this letter we again consulted OGC which advised us to restrict dissemination of all translations of copyrighted Soviet publications to U.S. Government recipients only. We have prepared a JPRS reply to VAAP (attached) which is being coordinated with OGC, NTIS, and Department of State. [redacted] of OGC is also in touch with the Department of Justice on this matter. NTIS is in contact with the Air Force and other government agencies concerned.

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4. NTIS is receiving complaints and is itself unhappy with our restricted dissemination which has cut into its service to the public. Other Government-sponsored translations of copyrighted Soviet publications have also been restricted including those of the National Science Foundation. We estimate that 60 percent of the political, economic, military, and sociological material and 95 percent of scientific and technical material that we translate from Soviet journals and books come from copyrighted sources and, therefore, now are restricted to Government users. Only abstracts,

because they are considered a "new product," continue to be available to the public. Of 23 JPRS serials on the USSR, eight contain only abstracts and are unaffected. Eight are limited to Government use only and the distribution of seven depends on the materials contained in a given issue. Those copyrighted Soviet publications which have the largest number of public subscriptions are USA: ECONOMICS, POLITICS, AND IDEOLOGY (57), METEOROLOGY AND HYDROLOGY (42), AND SPACE BIOLOGY AND AEROSPACE MEDICINE (39). USA recipients include universities, think tanks, and corporations. Soviet newspapers, such as PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA, on which we depend for current intelligence information to be carried on our Wire and in the DAILY REPORT are not copyrighted.

5. NTIS Director William Knox and his deputy Peter Urbach are scheduled to meet with VAAP representatives 24 and 26 March to explore the possibility of an agreement which will allow the U.S. Government to continue to translate and disseminate copyrighted Soviet materials. Nominal royalties applying to both Government and public dissemination will be the solution of last resort. NTIS proposes to become if necessary the executive agency to collect and pay whatever royalties may be agreed upon.

6. If you have further questions about this matter, please let me or [ ] know. We will report significant developments as they occur.

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[ ]  
Director

Foreign Broadcast Information Service

**Attachments:**

TAB A: VAAP letter and translation.

TAB B: Draft JPRS reply to VAAP.

**Distribution:**

- Orig. & 1 - Addressee w/atts.
- 1 - Chief/Prod w/atts.
- 1 - [ ] personal file w/atts.
- 1 - D/FBIS w/atts.
- 1 - FBIS Executive Registryw/atts.

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